

21 February 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, FBIF
Chief, Services Branch

SUBJECT: Progress Report on Cyprus Project for the
Period 10-21 February, 1948

The CIA group, accompanied by the U. S. Engineer representative from the Grecian District, arrived in Cyprus Wednesday, 18 February. Our departure from Cairo, originally scheduled for 12 February, was delayed by bad flying weather until 14 February. On that date we departed via Military Attache plane from Cairo for Cyprus via Damascus, Syria, where some diplomatic passengers were being taken. Unfavorable weather over Cyprus necessitated our remaining in Damascus the night of Saturday 14 February. On Sunday the 15th we proceeded to Beirut, Lebanon, in the Military Attache to Syria's plane, but were again held up by weather. On Wednesday 18 February we flew to Nicosia from Beirut via the Middle East Airlines. This was the first day the weather was sufficiently clear to fly to Cyprus.

Upon arrival in Nicosia we contacted Mr. R. M. Colyer, Manager of Cable and Wireless, Ltd., in Cyprus, secured our two jeeps which he was holding, and proceeded to the Dome Hotel, Kyrenia. We inspected the tentative station locations in the Kyrenia area on this date.

On Thursday 19 February we called on the Colonial Secretary, Mr. R. E. Turnbull, and presented our letter of introduction. He arranged to put us in touch with the following officials:

- H. G. Richards, Chief Asst. Colonial Secretary.
- J. Symons, Asst. Colonial Secretary and Member of the Communications Board.
- C. Mace, Director of Land Registration and Surveys.
- Mr. Mackey, Comptroller of Customs.
- Mr. Stratton, Director of Public Works.
- P. P. Taylor, Comptroller of Supplies, Transportation, and Marketing.
- Brigadier Anstice, Officer Commanding British Forces.
- Mr. Arthur, District Commissioner, Kyrenia and Nicosia Districts.

We discussed the so-called Diplomatic Privileges Law (Cyprus Statute Law 25 of 1947) granting certain immunities to international organizations in Cyprus, with the colonial Secretary. He was of the opinion that this law was enacted for the benefit of United Nations groups, and was not clear as to its application to our project. He has referred this matter to his Attorney General for interpretation. In the meantime, the following method of importing our equipment and supplies duty free has been arranged: lists of specific items to be imported by us will be submitted to Asst. Secy. Symons, who will present the lists to the Attorney General with official approval. The Attorney General will then arrange legal provisions for the importation of these items.

-2-

make the necessary legal arrangements for importation of these items free of duty.

Employees and prospective employees of F. B. I. S. can enter Cyprus on ordinary visas secured from the nearest British Consul in Egypt or other foreign country. The British Consul then will telegraph the Principal Immigration Officer of Cyprus for authority to issue the visas, stating in each case that the individual concerned is an "employee of Col. Seely". The Chief Colonial Secretary, Mr. H. G. Richards, will then personally see that the authority is promptly granted. After arrival, the visas can be extended for permanent residential status. Mr. Richards feels that we should have no difficulty in bringing in personnel of the various nationalities now represented among the key employees of our Cairo staff. We have the above arrangement in writing from Mr. Richards.

The document entitled "Outline for the Acquisition of Property" issued by the Department of State to American diplomatic and consular officers, is being followed in our approach to the acquisition of land. A copy of this document with amendments was obtained from Mr. Dusenberry, the FBO officer in the American Embassy in Cairo. A local attorney recommended by Mr. Colyer, Mr. George Chryssafinis, has been retained to assist in the acquisition of land in accordance with the above mentioned procedure. A meeting was arranged with the Director of Land Registration and Surveys, who gave us general information on the acquisition of land in Cyprus, and copies of the plots on the various sites we have under consideration. These sites will be visited by our group to gather data necessary to insure necessary space for the erection of the station and antenna system, following which offers will be solicited from the various owners. It appears from the plots that on the most desirable site there are 30 to 40 owners involved. All do not own land - some own the trees and others the wells, but in each case separate negotiations will have to be carried out. Should this prove to be an obstacle in expediting the acquisition of land, we can ask the Colonial Government to acquire the land under the land acquisition laws of Cyprus. However, we have been informed that such action could not be taken until the Colonial Governor is satisfied that an effort has been made to negotiate. In any event, should it develop that this is the only method by which we may acquire the land, a prior approval from Washington would appear to be in order, since such action might result in an unfavorable reaction to the U. S. Government by the local population.

We visited Famagusta and interviewed Mr. Mackey, the Comptroller of Customs, regarding port facilities. It was found that ships of over 420' length or 16' draft cannot enter the harbor. Famagusta has the largest harbor on the island. Larnaca, the next in size, is the port used by the American Export Lines, the only incoming American transportation. Their agents, A. L. Mantovani & Sons, were contacted in Larnaca, and advised us that they can handle all our incoming shipments. Ships anchor a half mile offshore and unload onto lighters for movement to docks at Larnaca. The antenna poles can be transported by small boat around the island to our site on the north shore near Kyrenia, where they can be unloaded

-3-

into the water and dragged ashore by tractor. It is not possible to transport the plocs overland because of narrow streets in the villages and sharp bends in the mountain roads. After discussion with Brigadier Anstice, Officer Commanding British Forces, it appears that they can provide trucks to transport our other supplies and equipment from Larnaca to Kyrenia. The manager of the Dome Hotel can provide warehouse space for our equipment until we get our storage building erected. To enable us to erect the storage building as soon as possible, the foundation plans should be forwarded to us in order that we may commence work as soon as final approval for the project has been given by the Director.

Mr. Quinn and Mr. Spivey have been working together to establish the cost of construction from local materials in order to arrive at a comparison with the cost of pre-fabricated structures. A complete report on this subject will be prepared by Mr. Spivey through the District Engineer at Athens as soon as sufficient data is obtained, and copies will be submitted by us to Washington. We have secured unit quotations for masonry type structures from one local contractor.

In order to insure against transmitter interference in the Kyrenia area, the plans for proposed broadcast and commercial stations were reviewed with Mr. Symons who is a member of the Telecommunications Board for Cyprus. Sharq Al Adna will be located in the vicinity of Limassol some forty-five miles south of Kyrenia with two mountain ranges intervening--no interference is anticipated from this source, nor is any difficulty expected in intercepting it. An RAF station is to be located about four miles from Nicosia; it will operate in the aviation bands with no anticipated conflict with international broadcasts. Commercial transmitters will also be operated at Famagusta, Larnaca, and Paphos. The nearest of these is 35 miles distant. The Kyrenia mountain range separates Kyrenia from each of these sites, while additional isolation is provided for Paphos by the Troodos Mountains. It is believed that we will be safe from interference.

The cable address FEDMONITOR KYRENIA has been registered with Cable & Wireless Ltd. for our project, and should be used for all incoming cables sent direct to us. Incoming mail should be addressed individually to Lt. Col. Seely or Mr. Stutler, Dome Hotel, Kyrenia, Cyprus. Classified messages should be sent to Ben Hall in Cairo, who is working out arrangements for their transmission via British courier to Cyprus.

We have made no statements to the press or other unauthorized persons concerning our mission. However, the following is a translation of an article which appeared in "Eleftheria", a Greek language paper in Nicosia, on 20 February, two days after our arrival:

"INSTALLATION IN CYPRUS OF A BROADCASTING STATION.

"We are informed that five Americans specialists in

-4-

radiobroadcasting have arrived from Beirut by special plane. They were supplied with special passports and on their arrival they proceeded at once to Kyrenia.

"Their arrival in Cyprus is connected with the installation probably somewhere in Kyrenia of a small monitoring service which will be managed by special service of the BBC and corresponding American service.

"It is said that such a station has been operating in Cyprus during the war, and has been used mainly for the receiving of secret radiotelegrams which were transmitted from Russia to the guerrillas in Greece.

"By this re-installation of such a station in Cyprus the Anglo-Americans services will be informed of the views of the various countries on the events in the Middle East."

The same article was briefly mentioned in the English language "Cypriot" published in Nicosia, on February 21. It is not known how this information reached the press, however our arrival was inevitably noted with interest by Customs inspectors, and the paper probably combined this news with the previous authorized press release made by General Sibert's group, and arrived at their story.

All British officials so far contacted have been most cooperative in expediting our requests, with the possible exception of the extension of blanket immunities under their diplomatic privileges law.

/s/ ROGER G. SEELEY

/s/ Warner Stutler